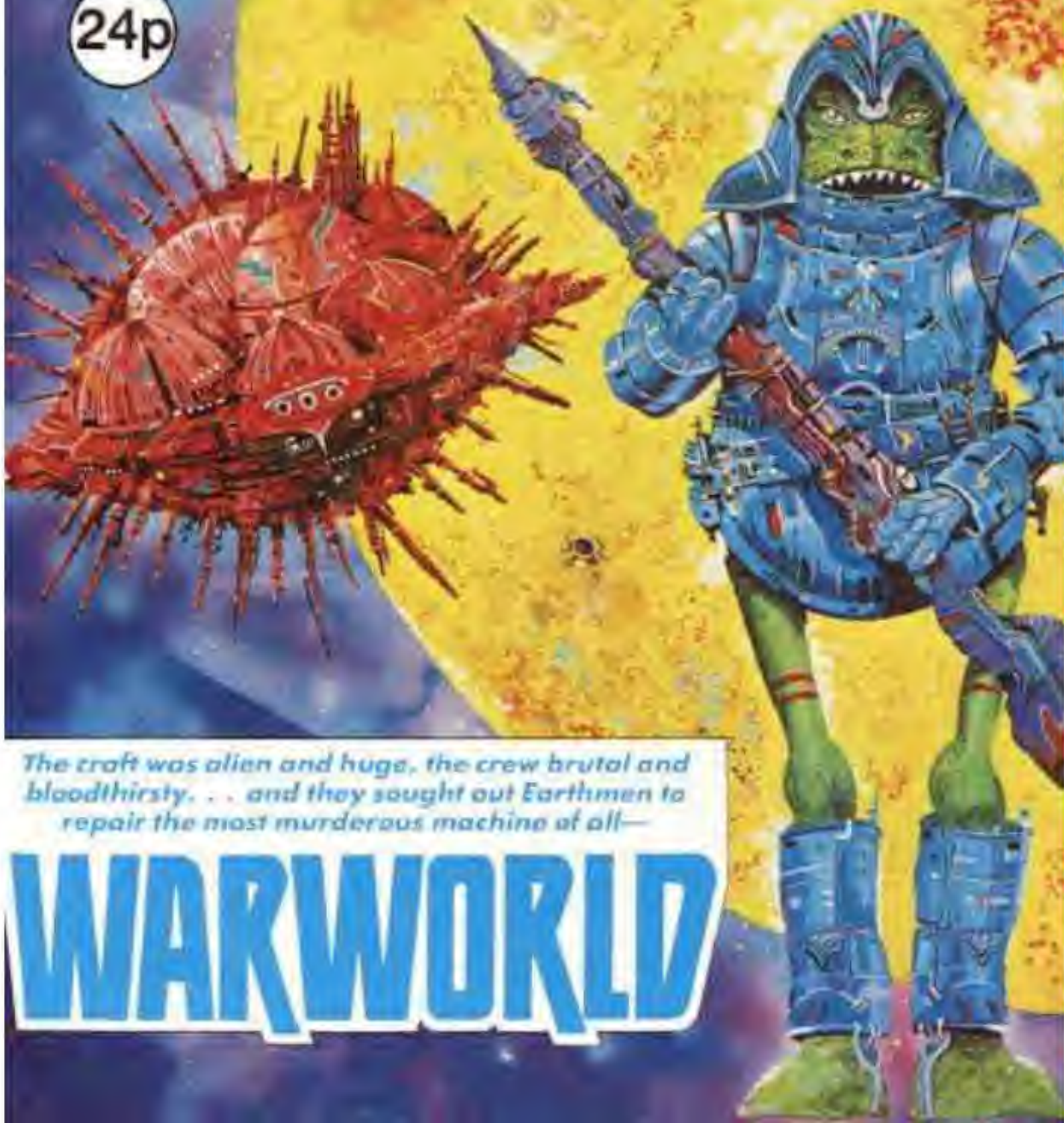


STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 157

24p



The craft was alien and huge, the crew brutal and bloodthirsty. . . and they sought out Earthmen to repair the most murderous machine of all—

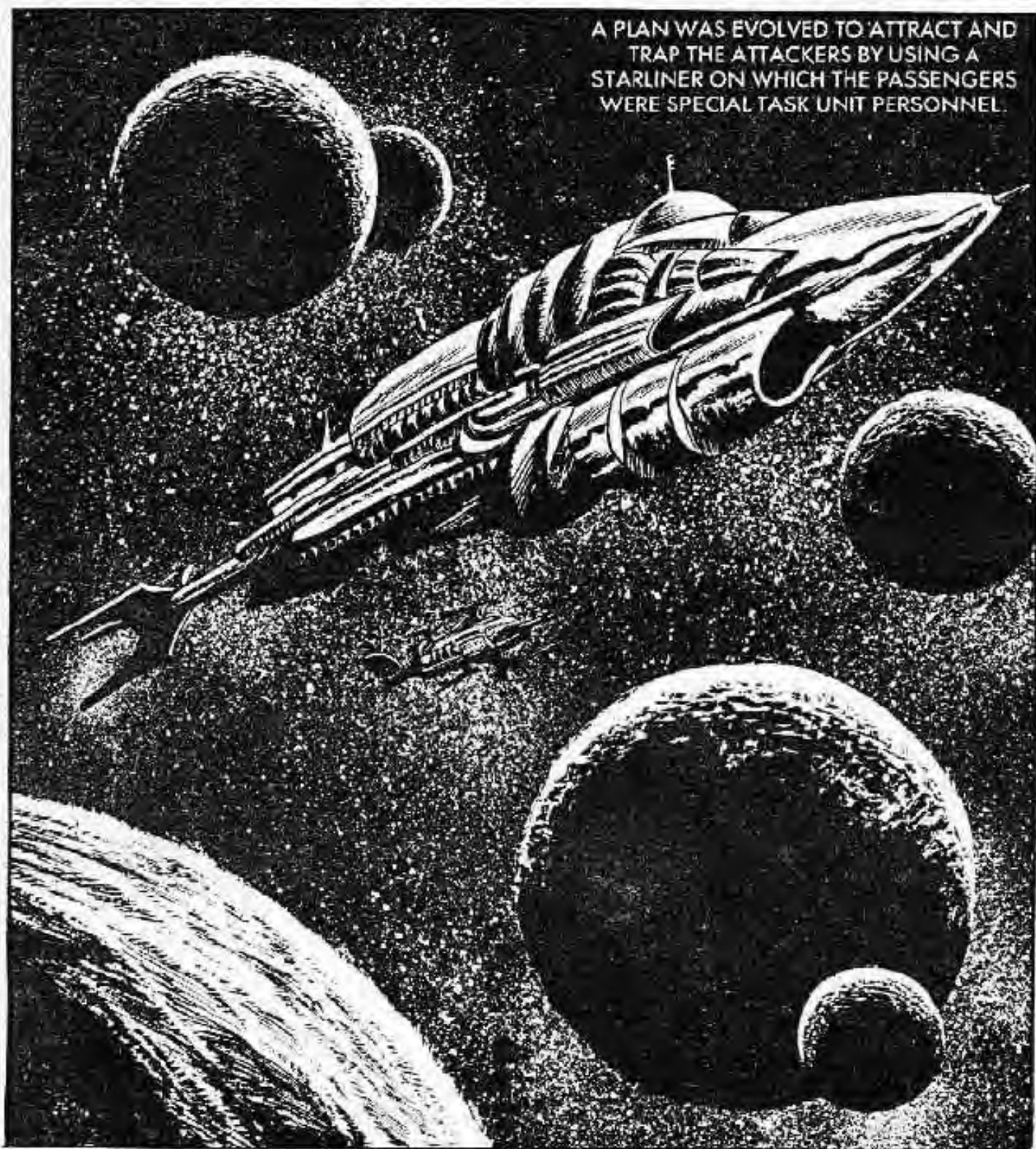
WARWORLD

STARBLAZER


STRANGE THINGS WERE HAPPENING IN FAR SPACE, AND EARTH SECURITY WAS WORRIED. FOR MONTHS STARLINERS AND SPACE FREIGHTERS HAD BEEN DISAPPEARING WITHOUT TRACE IN THE SCORPIO 8 SECTOR OUT ON THE GALACTIC RIM. THE TOTAL ABSENCE OF CLUES HAD THWARTED ALL INVESTIGATIONS. AT LAST THE SPECIAL TASK UNIT WAS CALLED IN. THEY REALISED THAT ALL ARMED SHIPS OF SPACE FLEET WERE LEFT UNHARMED — SO THEY DECIDED TO USE BAIT.

WARINWORLD

A PLAN WAS EVOLVED TO ATTRACT AND
TRAP THE ATTACKERS BY USING A
STARLINER ON WHICH THE PASSENGERS
WERE SPECIAL TASK UNIT PERSONNEL.



LEADER OF THE S.T.U. FORCE WAS MAJOR COBB, A VETERAN OF THE PSYCHIC WARS, WHICH HAD TAKEN PLACE TEN YEARS EARLIER —




WHAT'S OUR PROGRESS
STATUS, CAPTAIN?

WE'RE ABOUT TO ENTER THE DANGER
AREA. I SUGGEST WE LOSE YOUR ESCORT
SHIP NOW!

DO YOU COPY THAT,
TASK UNIT?

ROGER! WE'RE DROPPING
BACK TO THE LIMIT OF OUR
SENSOR RANGE. WE'LL
COME RUNNING THE
MOMENT WE SEE YOU'RE IN
TROUBLE.



WHAT DO I DO
NOW, MAJOR COBB?

JUST CARRY ON AS IF THIS WERE A
NORMAL TRIP. WE DON'T KNOW
WHAT'S OUT THERE, BUT MY MEN
ARE PREPARED FOR MOST THINGS.

IF WE'RE ATTACKED, WE'LL CONTAIN
THE ATTACK UNTIL MY SHIP ARRIVES!

BUT FIFTY SPACIALS LATER COBB'S PLAN WENT BADLY WRONG WHEN THE STARLINER
SUDDENLY LOST ALL SPEED AND POWER.

JUPE!
STAND BY!




WE'VE A TOTAL WIPE-OUT ON ALL SENSORS AND POWER SYSTEMS! I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED!

WE'LL FIND OUT WHEN WE REACH THE AIRLOCKS!



THROUGH THE PORT OF AN AIRLOCK —

ALIEN CRAFT! THAT THING'S NOT FROM THIS GALAXY!



THEY'RE LOOKING FOR US. BLAST
WHATEVER COMES OUT OF THOSE.

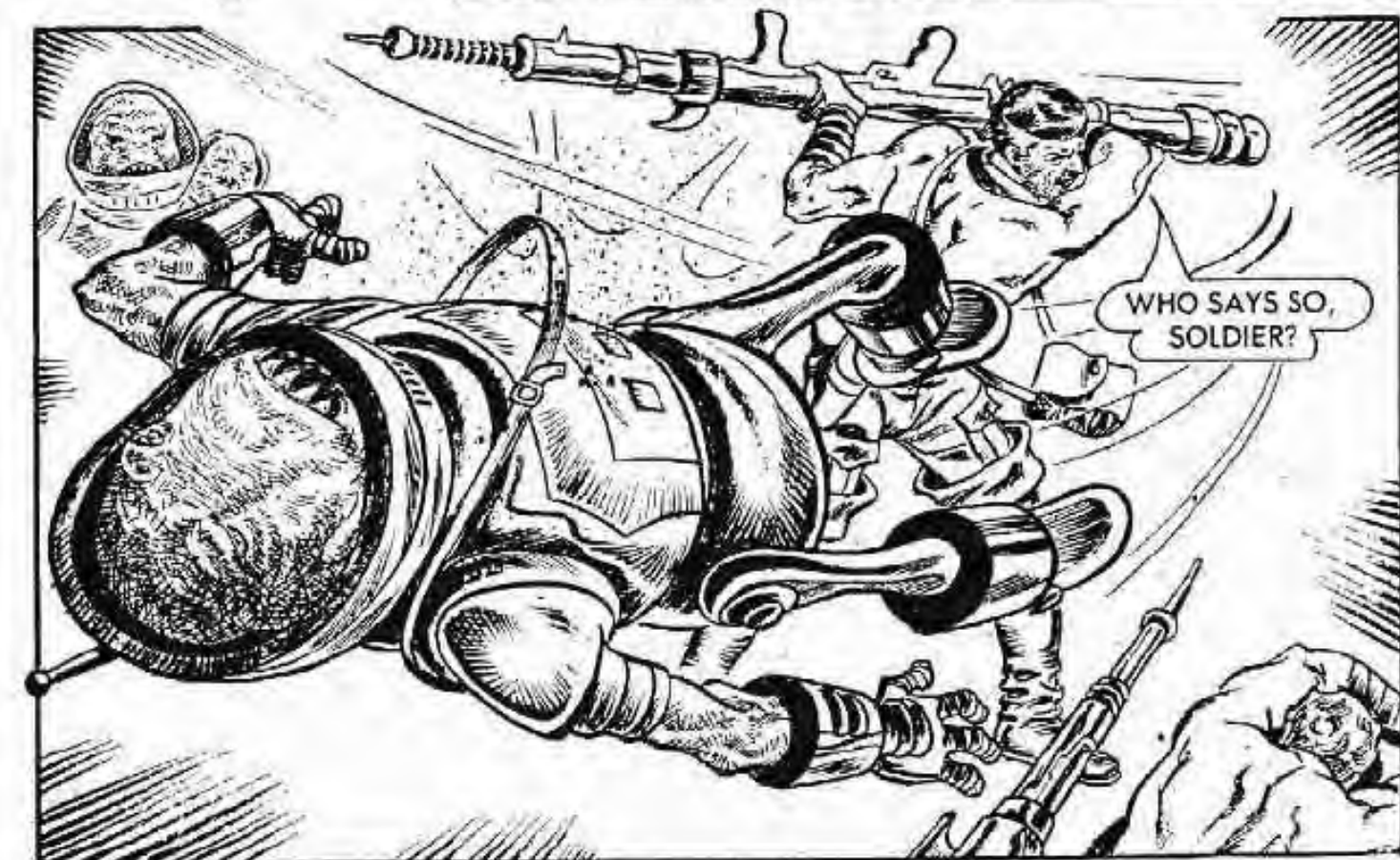
BUT THE ALIENS DOCKING TUBES PIERCED THE BULKHEADS —

LOOK AT THOSE BULKHEADS CRUMBLING.
TURN THOSE PHAZOOKAS ROUND!

ARMED ALIENS STORMED ABOARD —

THE WEAPONS WON'T WORK. THE
POWER'S BEEN NEUTRALISED!

IT'S NO USE!
WE'RE DEFENCELESS!



9

ALTHOUGH THEIR PHASERS WOULDN'T WORK, COBB'S DISTRESS FLARE CAUSED HAVOC —

YESSIR!

GET THOSE GUNS AND SMOKE THESE CREEPS!

WE'VE GOT TO BUY TIME UNTIL OUR TASK UNIT SHIP CAN GET HERE!

WE'LL NEVER DO IT, SIR! WE HAVEN'T ENOUGH CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.



THE TASK MEN USED THEIR OWN SPECIAL KEY TO OPEN THE INNER DOOR —



KEEP SHOOTING! KEEP THEM CONFUSED!
HEAD FOR THE CONTROL ROOM! IT'S
SOMEWHERE UP AHEAD. TAKE THAT AND
WE TAKE CONTROL!



WITH MOST OF THE ALIEN TROOPERS STILL ON BOARD THE STARLINER, COBB'S MEN CARVED A ROUTE THROUGH THE SHIP.



THE NOW SUPERIOR FIRE-POWER OF THE S.T.U. WON THEM CONTROL OF THE ALIEN SHIP.

ON SCREEN WAS THE ESCORT SHIP

SIR! LOOK AT THE SCREEN!

THAT'S WHAT I CALL A WELCOME SIGHT. NOW WE'LL FIND OUT WHAT THESE VERMIN HAVE BEEN PLAYING AT!

BUT —

HELL'S NOVA!

A HUGE VESSEL RIPPLED INTO VIEW



WE'VE BEEN TRICKED! THAT MONSTER
WAS WAITING FOR ANY POSSIBLE
HELP!



ALTHOUGH OUR ESCORT IS FINISHED, IT WILL HAVE
ALERTED ALL EARTH SHIPS IN ITS COMMUNICATION
RANGE. THERE'S NO WAY THEY COULD GET HERE IN
TIME, THOUGH.

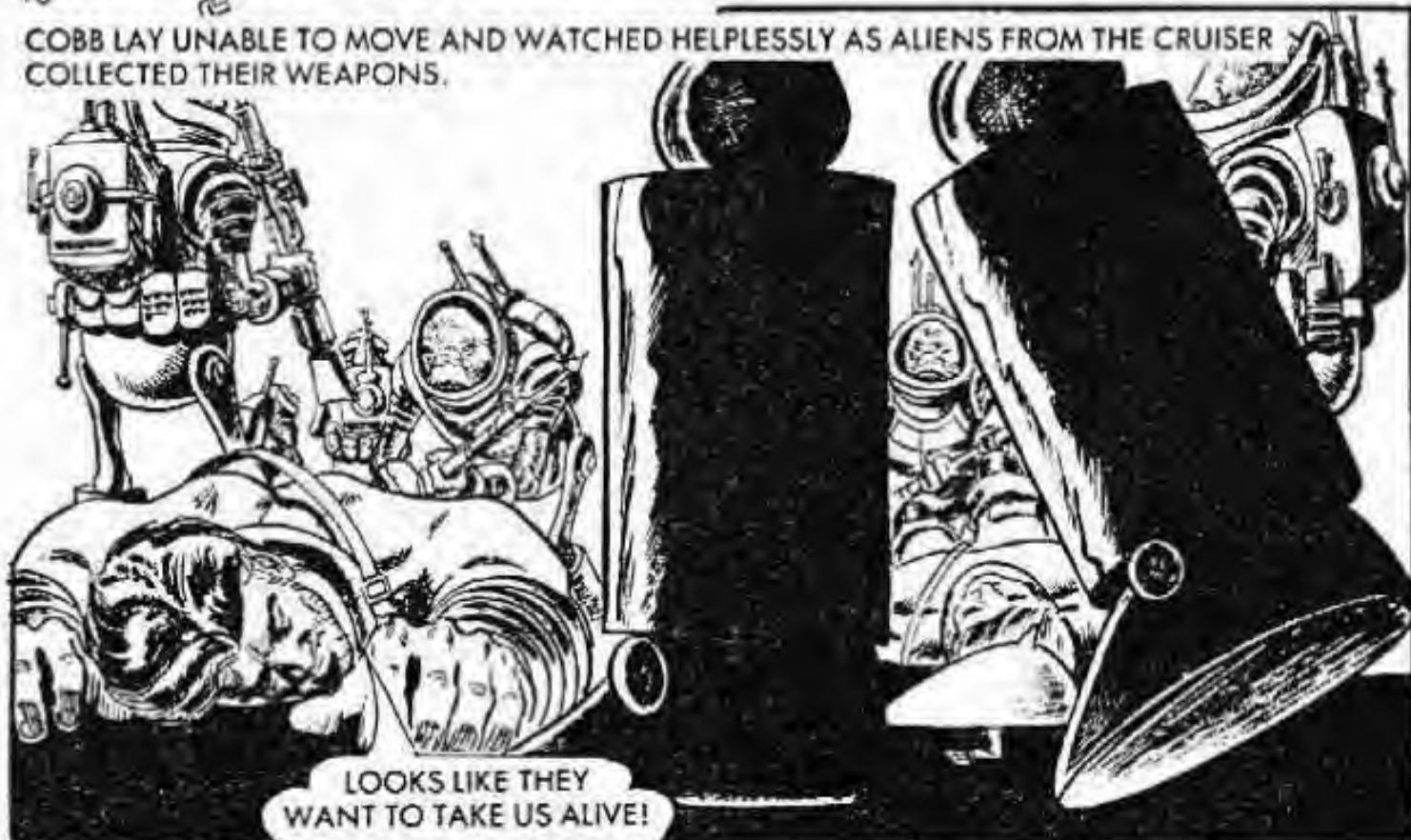
A BEAM OF VIBRATING LIGHT LANCED OUT FROM THE LARGE ALIEN CRUISER.

INSIDE THE STARLINE AND ALIEN ATTACK SHIP, FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE COLLAPSED TO THE FLOOR. THEY WERE IN THE GRIP OF A GRAVITY BEAM THAT INCREASED THEIR WEIGHT MANY TIMES.

I...I... CAN'T MOVE...
BEING CRUSHED...

CAN'T BREATHE...

COBB LAY UNABLE TO MOVE AND WATCHED HELPLESSLY AS ALIENS FROM THE CRUISER COLLECTED THEIR WEAPONS.



LOOKS LIKE THEY
WANT TO TAKE US ALIVE!

ONE BY ONE THE
MEN RECOVERED—


THESE ARE INJURED TOO BADLY
TO BE OF USE!




THEN KILL THEM!




THE ALIEN SPOKE INTO A SMALL VOICE TRANSLATOR.



I DEMAND TOTAL OBEDIENCE. THIS IS YOUR ONLY WARNING. IF ANYONE MOVES OUT OF LINE OR SPEAKS — THEN HE WILL DIE!



WHERE ARE YOU TAKING US?



YOU WERE WARNED, FOOL!

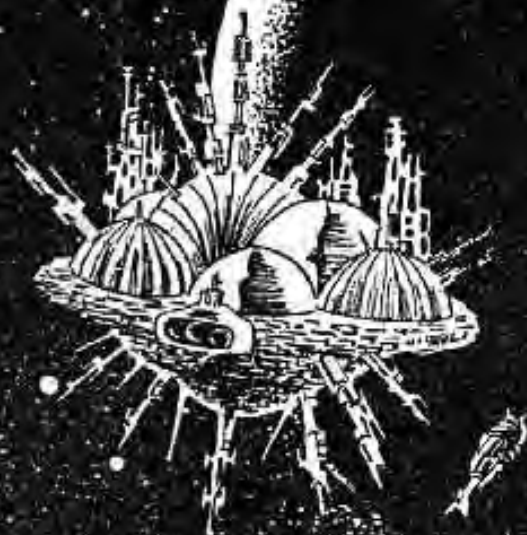
ARRGH!

STEADY, MEN, THESE HELL-LICE WILL MASSACRE THE LOT OF US! STAY COOL, STAY ALIVE!

THEY'RE MOVING OUT AND BRINGING THE
STARLINER WITH THEM. IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE!

YEAH! WE KNOW NOW WHO'S BEEN TAKING
OUR SHIPS AND HOW — BUT WE STILL HAVE TO
FIND OUT WHY!

2.7 UNITS LATER—



LOOKS LIKE WE'LL FIND OUT SOON, SIR!
THERE'S A PLANET UP AHEAD!

THE CRUISER LEFT AND THEY CAME IN TO TOUCH DOWN BY A HUGE, IMMOBILISED CRAFT—



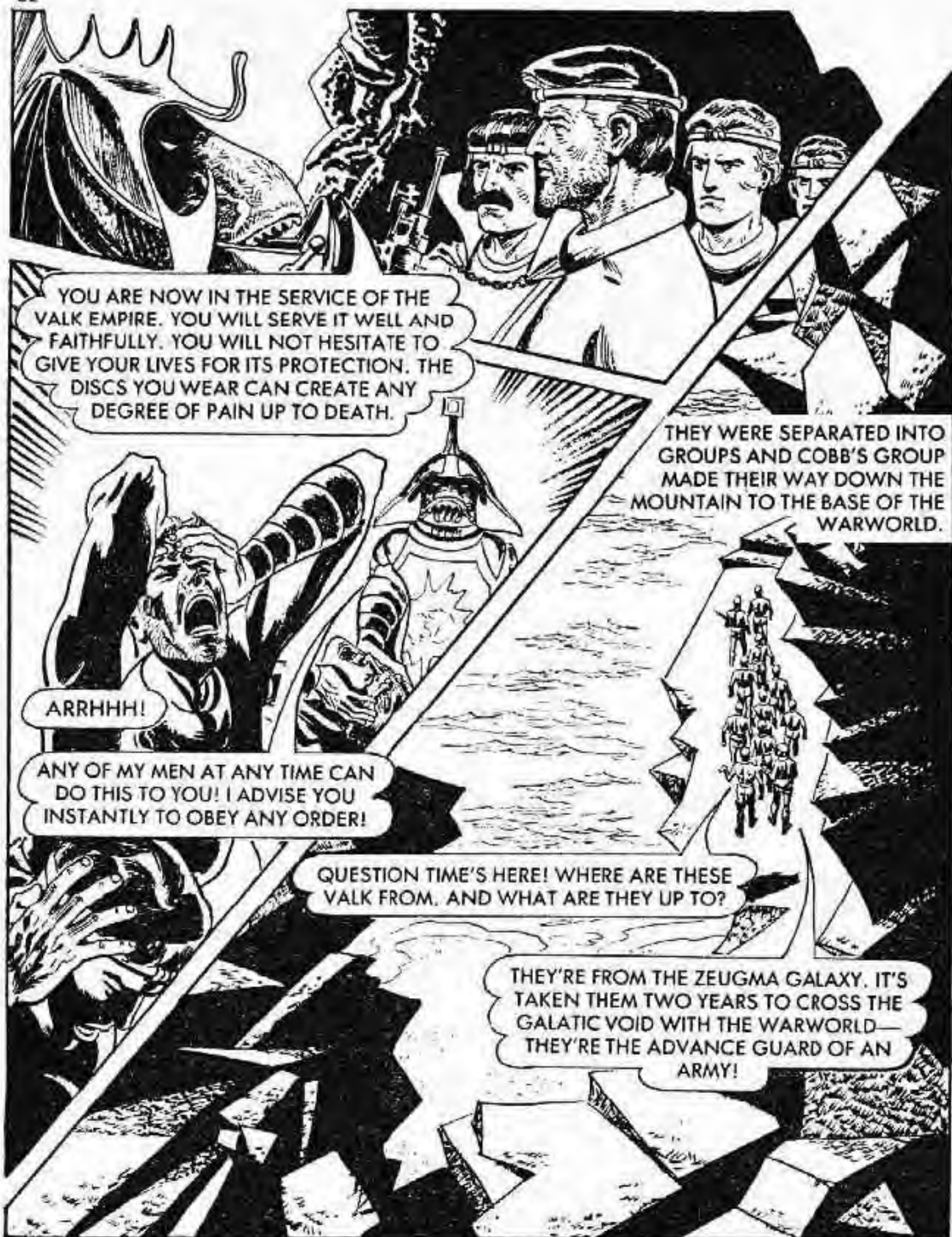
THE GUARDS WERE OF TERRAN ORIGIN—

THESE GUARDS MUST BE FROM
THE OTHER HI-JACKED SHIPS!

INDEED WE ARE! SORRY ABOUT THIS,
BUT WE'VE NO CHOICE!

THEY WERE TAKEN AWAY AND NARROW BANDS WERE STUCK TO THEIR FOREHEADS.

THIS WAY! THE COMMANDER'S GOT
A FEW WORDS TO SAY TO YOU ALL!



YOU ARE NOW IN THE SERVICE OF THE VALK EMPIRE. YOU WILL SERVE IT WELL AND FAITHFULLY. YOU WILL NOT HESITATE TO GIVE YOUR LIVES FOR ITS PROTECTION. THE DISCS YOU WEAR CAN CREATE ANY DEGREE OF PAIN UP TO DEATH.

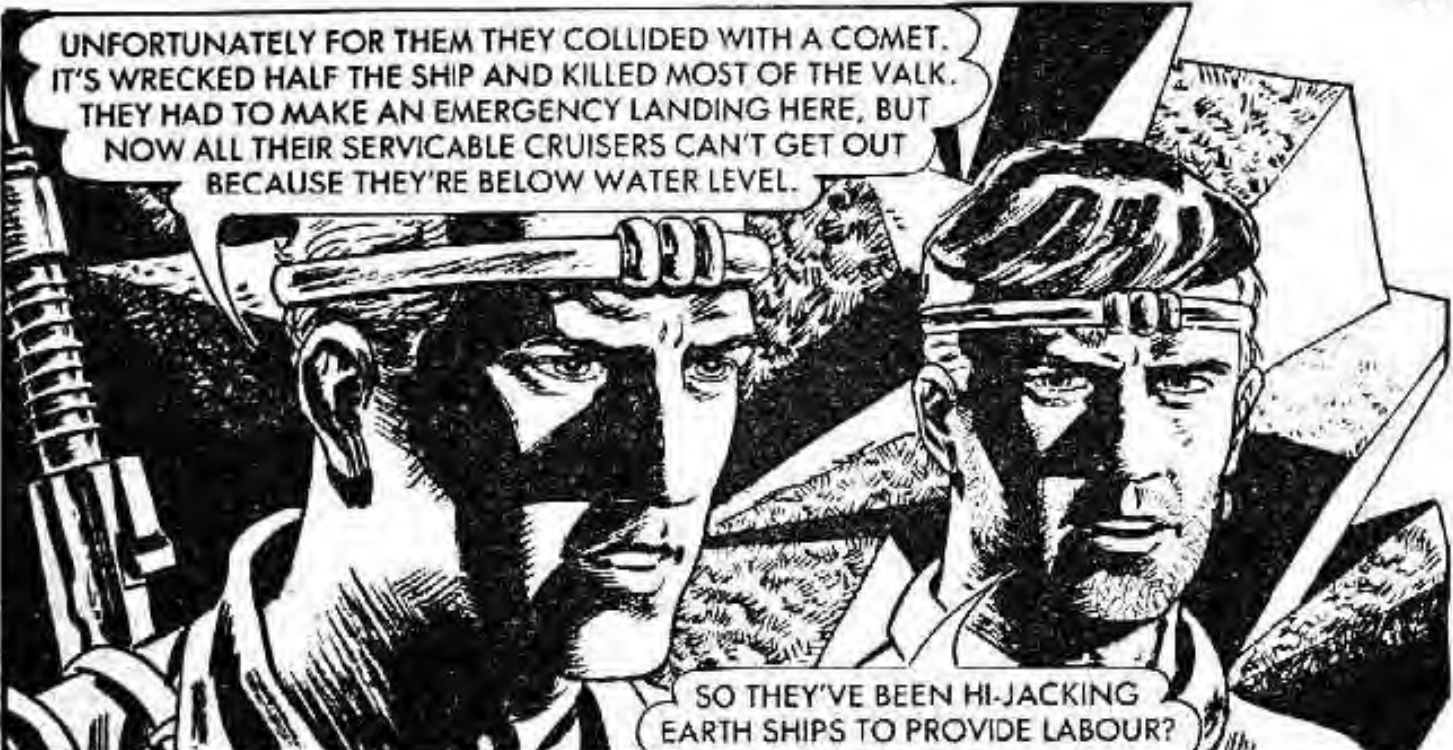
THEY WERE SEPARATED INTO GROUPS AND COBB'S GROUP MADE THEIR WAY DOWN THE MOUNTAIN TO THE BASE OF THE WARWORLD.

ARRHHH!

ANY OF MY MEN AT ANY TIME CAN DO THIS TO YOU! I ADVISE YOU INSTANTLY TO OBEY ANY ORDER!


QUESTION TIME'S HERE! WHERE ARE THESE VALK FROM, AND WHAT ARE THEY UP TO?

THEY'RE FROM THE ZEUGMA GALAXY. IT'S TAKEN THEM TWO YEARS TO CROSS THE GALATIC VOID WITH THE WARWORLD—THEY'RE THE ADVANCE GUARD OF AN ARMY!



UNFORTUNATELY FOR THEM THEY COLLIDED WITH A COMET. IT'S WRECKED HALF THE SHIP AND KILLED MOST OF THE VULK. THEY HAD TO MAKE AN EMERGENCY LANDING HERE, BUT NOW ALL THEIR SERVICABLE CRUISERS CAN'T GET OUT BECAUSE THEY'RE BELOW WATER LEVEL.

SO THEY'VE BEEN HI-JACKING EARTH SHIPS TO PROVIDE LABOUR?



AND SPARE PARTS! THE ENGINES ARE UNDER WATER AND IN A BAD SHAPE. THEY NEED THEM SO THEY CAN STRAIGHTEN THE WARWORLD AND RELEASE THEIR CRUISERS. THAT'S WHERE YOU COME IN! THEY'RE IN NEED OF PROFESSIONAL FIGHTERS!

AT THE WATER'S EDGE THEY KITTED THEMSELVES WITH UNDERWATER GEAR.

MOST OF THE WILDLIFE ON THIS PLANET'S EVOLVED UNDERWATER—AND BOY, IS IT WILD!

IT'S OUR JOB TO PROTECT THEM!







THEY HAD TO GET CLOSE TO THE JELLYFISH, BUT COBB GOT TOO CLOSE—

LOOK OUT, MAJOR.

LET GO,
YOU BRUTE!

HE WAS RIGHT! THE BLASTS
GO STRAIGHT THROUGH!

HAVE TO USE MY
LASER KNIFE!





COBB WAS SUCKED INSIDE, BUT
MANAGED TO RELEASE SOME OXYGEN
AS A PLAN FORMED IN HIS MIND—



AS THE OXYGEN EXPANDED IT PULLED THE JELLYFISH TOWARDS THE SURFACE AT INCREASING SPEED.



IT SHOT FROM THE WATER ...

I CAN'T CUT FAST ENOUGH! I'LL HAVE TO
MAKE SOME SPACE BEFORE IT MELTS ME
AWAY!

COBB OPENED A VALVE IN HIS HELMET AND A DAY'S SUPPLY OF ATOMICALLY COMPRESSED
OXYGEN GUSHED OUT TO FORM A GREAT BUBBLE—

THAT'S GIVEN ME
SOME BREATHING SPACE!



BACK AT THE BASE—

LOOKS AS IF YOU'VE SEEN
SEEN SOME ACTION TODAY!

DEAD RIGHT WE HAVE! WE'VE HAD ELVERS
TRYING TO BREAK THROUGH TO THE HULL
ALL DAY!

THE MUFFLED 'THUD' OF AN UNDERWATER EXPLOSION VIBRATED THROUGH THE AIR—


SOUNDS LIKE
THEY'VE MADE IT!

EVERYONE GET OVER
THERE AT ONCE!

RAPIDLY THEY HEADED DOWN—

THESE MEN HAVE BEEN BLOWN UP!
I THOUGHT THIS PLANT WAS PRIMITIVE!

IT IS, BUT THERE'S A SPECIES OF EEL—THE
ELVER WE CALL IT, THAT FEEDS ON LOW
GRADE NUCLEAR FUEL. AND THAT'S WHAT
WE USE IN UNDERWATER EXPLOSIVES.




IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE
GOT INSIDE!

WE'LL HAVE TO GO
AFTER THEM!

LOOK OUT—IT'S
AN AMBUSH!





LOOKS LIKE WE'VE FOUND
A FIGHTER HANGAR!

SOMETHING'S MOVING
OVER THERE!


WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST WE DO?

IT'S ONE OF MY MEN!

KEEP QUIET! THERE ARE SCORES OF ELVERS
IN THE REAR HANGAR LOOKING FOR
EXPLOSIVES! TOO MANY TO FIGHT IN A
CONFINED SPACE!

WE WAIT HERE AND AMBUSH
THEM—THEY'LL HAVE TO COME
BACK THIS WAY! IF WE LIE LOW IN
THE WATER THEY WON'T SPOT US
UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE!





ARRGH!

THE EXPLOSIVE BURST OF FIRE INCINERATED A FIGHTER—

THE ENGINES HAVE FIRED!
GET UNDERWATER—QUICK!

THE SPACERS DIVED BENEATH THE WATER WAS
THE FIRE SPREAD TOWARDS THE HANGAR
DOORS —

—AND THEY WERE JUST IN TIME.

A BRAIN-JELLING EXPLOSION RIPPED A HOLE TO THE SKY —





THAT GOT RID OF OUR
LITTLE PROBLEM!

IT'S A BASIC LAYOUT. I RECKON
I COULD FLY THIS THING!


DON'T BE STUPID! THE VALK
WOULDN'T LET YOU GET AWAY WITH IT!

HEY, LOOK AT THAT! THE EXPLOSION'S
FREED ANOTHER FIGHTER AND CLEARED
THE WAY FOR A SPACE-OUT!



THE FATAL SIGNAL WAS BEAMED,
AND THE CRAFT RETURNED—





SLONE'S DEAD, BUT WE'VE GOT TO STOP THEM SOMEHOW! THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF CRUISERS STILL INTACT ON THE INWARD SIDE. IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE THEY CAN RAISE THE WARWORLD UP AND RELEASE THEM!

JUST HOW DO WE DO IT? THEY ONLY HAVE TO POINT A TORCH AND WE DO WHATEVER THEY WANT!

I GOT A LOAD OF THESE OUT OF A LINER. THEY'RE FULL OF COMA-GAS—WE COULD GAS THE VALK!

IT COULDN'T BE DONE, ASTIX! WE'D HAVE TO GAS THEM ALL AT THE SAME TIME!

COMA-GAS INDUCED A DEEP SLEEP SO THAT SPACE TRAVELLERS COULD SURVIVE BRIEF OXYGEN FAILURES.

WE COULD GAS OURSELVES! IF THE RINGS KILL BY INTENSE PAIN, THEN ANYONE UNDER COMA-GAS WOULDN'T FEEL A THING FROM THE DISCS!

I GET IT! YOU STEAL THE FIGHTER, LOCK THE CONTROLS AND SNIFF GAS BEFORE THE VALK CAN KILL YOU!

THE AUTO PILOT WOULD HAVE TO BE KNOCKED OUT, BUT I'LL MANAGE THAT. BY THE TIME I WAKE UP, I SHOULD BE WITHIN SENSOR RANGE OF THE EARTH FLEET.

NEXT DAY, COBB MADE A BREAK IN THE FIGHTER—

THE FOOLS DON'T LEARN!
KILL THIS ONE NOW!

ON BOARD THE STOLEN CRAFT—

TIME FOR A SLEEP!

AT VALK CONTROL—

THE FIGHTER'S NOT
RESPONDING, SIR!

CURSE! IT MUST
HAVE BEEN DAMAGED!



HOURS LATER COBB RECOVERED
CONSCIOUSNESS.

LOOKS AS IF I'M ALIVE. NOW
LET'S SEE ABOUT FINDING SOME FRIENDS!



HE TRACKED DOWN AND HOMED
IN ON THE SEARCHING EARTH
FLEET.

MAJOR COBB, SPECIAL TASK UNIT 8.
REQUESTING PERMISSION TO COME
ABOARD!

YOU'VE GOT
IT, SOLDIER!



COBB TOLD HIS STORY AND THEN HAD HIS SLAVE DISC SURGICALLY REMOVED.


CAN IT BE USED AGAIN, DOC?

OH, YES! IT WORKS BY PICKING UP A SORT OF RADIO WAVE. THE MOMENT YOU PUT IT BACK ON IT REACTIVATES ITS RECEIVER!

COBB'S INFORMATION WAS FED BACK TO EARTH—

I'VE JUST RECEIVED A TOTAL PRIORITY ORDER FROM EARTH TO GO IN AND ATOMISE THE WARWORLD.

SIR, I'D LIKE TO GO BACK TO THE WARWORLD IN THE FIGHTER FIRST. THERE ARE SCORES OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN HELD HOSTAGE IN THE CAVES. I THINK I COULD GET THEM TO SAFETY BEFORE YOU BLASTED THE WARWORLD!



WE CAN'T RISK THAT VALK FLEET GETTING CLEAR.
YOU'VE GOT SIX HOURS THEN I'M COMING IN.

I UNDERSTAND THAT, SIR. I'LL WILLINGLY
TAKE THE RISK OF DYING WITH THEM!



COBB REPAIRED THE AUTOPILOT
AND AGAIN BREATHED COMA-
GAS . . .

THE FIGHTER IS
RETURNING!

THE FAULT MUST HAVE CLEARED
ITSELF. PREPARE TO EXAMINE THE
BODY!

THE CRAFT LANDED—



BUT COBB QUICKLY REVIVED TO THE AMAZEMENT OF HIS FRIENDS.



I'M GOING TO TRY AND DE-ACTIVATE THE DISCS. ON EARTH FLEET THEY THOUGHT THEY WERE POWERED FROM A CENTRAL TRANSMITTER WITH THE 'TORCHES' ACTING LIKE A VOLUME CONTROL!

THIS ONE'S A FAKE I HAD MADE! AND THIS REAL ONE IS FOR THE VALK OFFICER I'M GOING TO CATCH. SPREAD THE WORD, THE MOMENT THE DISCS DE-ACTIVATE EVERYONE'S TO FIGHT THEIR WAY INTO THE CAVES. IT'LL BE THE ONLY SAFE PLACE WHEN THE FLEET COMES ZAPPING IN HERE!

GOOD LUCK, COBB!



COBB SEARCHED UNTIL HE FOUND A VALK OFFICER BY HIMSELF.

EXCUSE ME, SIR! I
HAVE A MESSAGE FOR YOU!

WE'LL GIVE IT TO ME!

WITH PLEASURE!



WHEN THE VALK RECOVERED THERE WAS A DISC ON HIS HEAD—

I WANT YOU TO TAKE ME TO THE
TRANSMITTER THAT OPERATES THESE
DISCS. YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS
WHEN I POINT THIS AT YOU, DON'T YOU?

YES, YES!
I'LL TAKE YOU!



THE VALK LEAD COBB THROUGH A PART OF THE WARWORLD WHERE ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY MADE IT LOOK UPRIGHT.

NO TRICKS, OR I'LL
SCRAMBLE YOUR BRAINS!

WE'RE NEARLY THERE!

THEY ENTERED A CONTROL HALL AT THE HEART OF THE WARWORLD.

THAT'S WHAT
YOU'RE AFTER!

YOU'D BETTER BE
RIGHT, VERMIN!

WHAT'S THAT CREATURE DOING HERE? NO
SLAVES ARE ALLOWED IN THIS AREA.

I WAS ORDERED TO BRING
HIM, COMMANDER!

THE COMMANDER POINTED A TORCH AT COBB,
BUT IT WAS THE VALK WHO SCREAMED IN
AGONY—

WHO SENT YOU, SL...

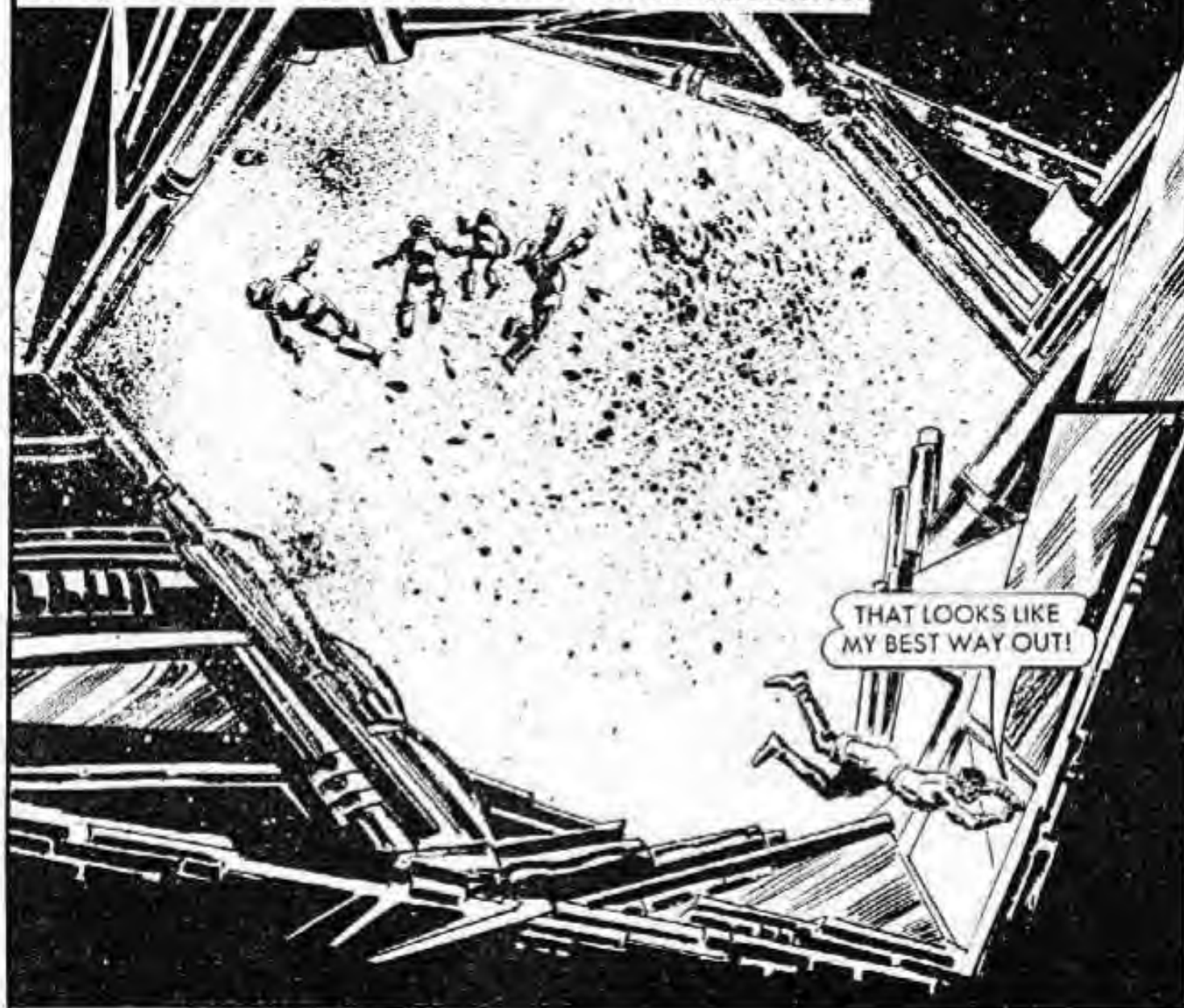
I'M FROM VERMIN
EXTERMINATORS!




BEFORE THE VALK COULD REACT, COBB HAD HURLED A HAND-BOMB AT THE DISC TRANSMITTER—




AS THE BOMB EXPLODED, COBB DIVED TOWARDS A DISPOSAL CHUTE.






I MIGHT AS WELL HOLE UP FOR A WHILE!
ALL HELL'S GOING TO BREAK LOOSE!



DISCOVERING THEY WERE FREE OF
THE DISCS' POWER, THE EARTHMEN
SOUGHT VENGEANCE—



SHOOT THE STINKING
GROKKARDS!

YOU AIN'T GONNA
TORTURE AGAIN!


EVERYWHERE, THEY BATTLED THEIR WAY OUT OF THE WARWORLD. THE OUTNUMBERED VALK REELED IN CONFUSION.



WITHDRAW TO THE
MOUNTAIN CAVES!

THE LONG RANGE SENSORS ARE
PICKING UP A FLEET OF SHIPS!


THEY CAN'T BE OUR INVASION ARMY —
THEY'RE COMING FROM THE WRONG
DIRECTION!



IF THEY DESTROY US HERE OUR ARMY WILL BE COMPLETELY
DEFENCELESS WHEN IT ARRIVES!


TWO OF THE WARWORLD'S ENGINES ARE IN A
WORKING STATUS. THEY CAN PROVIDE JUST
ENOUGH POWER FOR US TO REACH PLANETARY
ORBIT WHERE WE CAN LAUNCH OUR CRUISERS.

COBB HAD HEARD THE VALK—



OUR WARSHIPS WILL HAVE
NO CHANCE AGAINST
THOSE CRUISERS! I'LL HAVE
TO TRY AND STOP THEM!

COBB SLID DOWN THE CHUTE UNTIL HE SPOTTED A WRECKED FIGHTER HANGAR



SOMEONE ELSE HAS GOT IDEAS
ABOUT TAKING A FIGHTER!



THE AIR SCREAMED AND THE SEA BOILED AS THE GREAT VESSEL FIRED ITS ENGINES AND STRUGGLED UPRIGHT.

IT'S WORKING!



FOOT BY FOOT THE WARWORLD PULLED ITSELF INTO THE SKY—

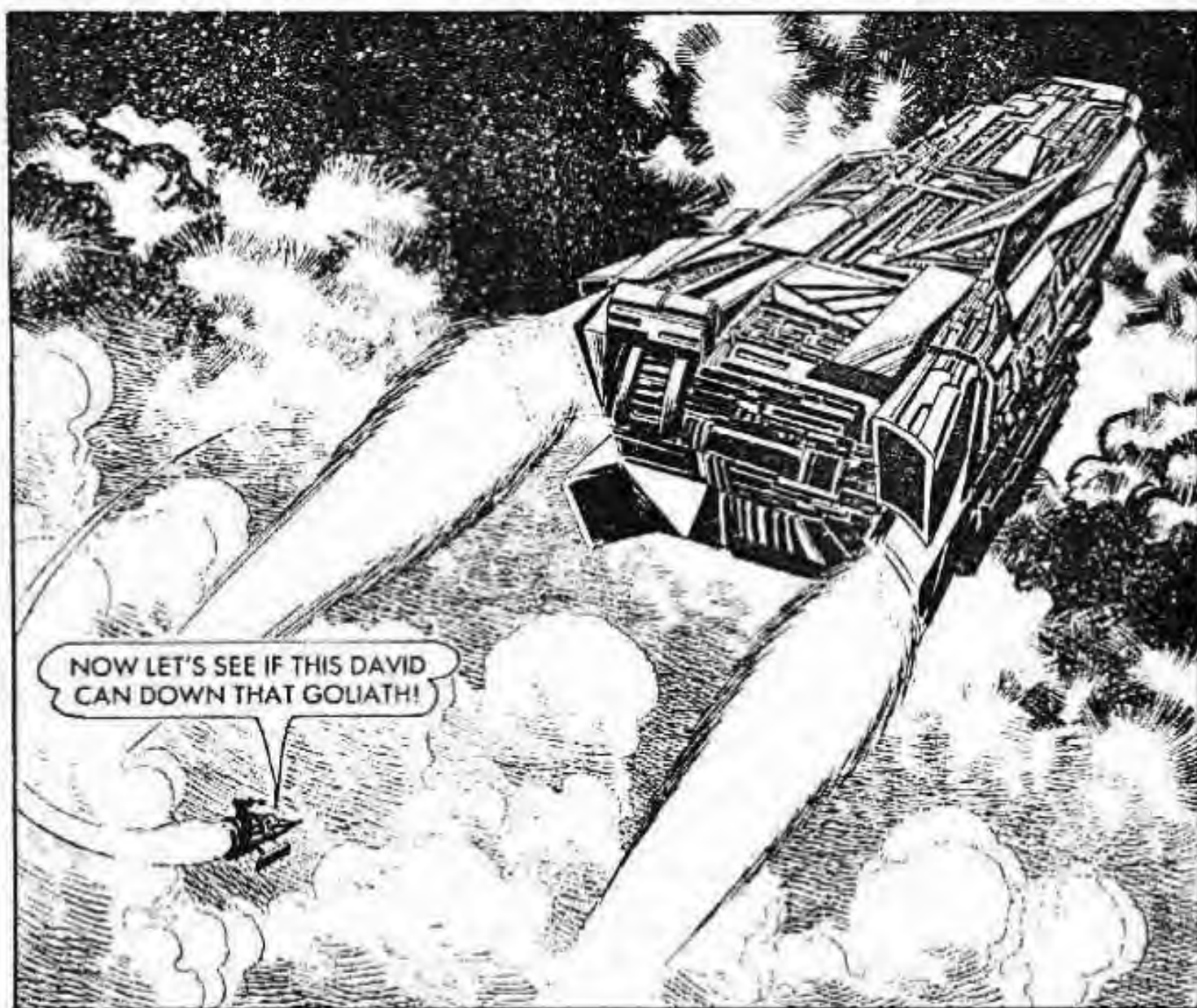
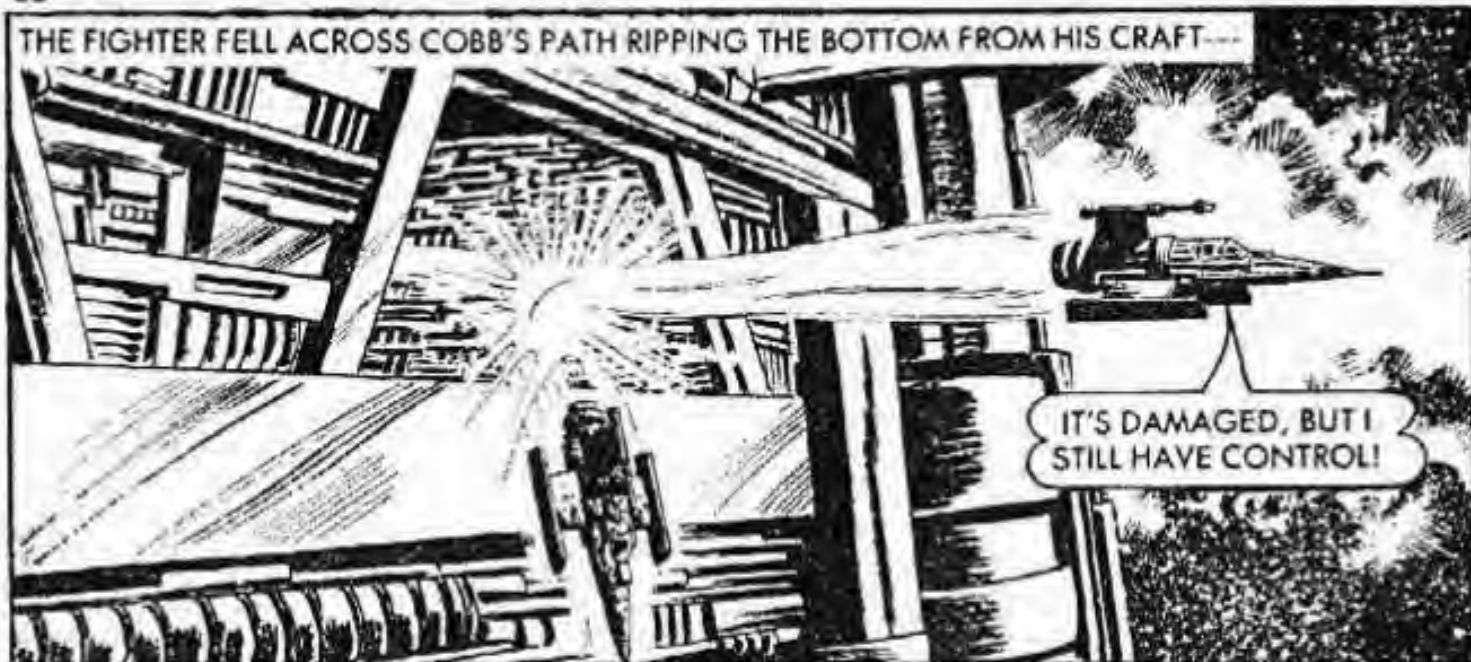
THEY'RE SUCCEEDING! NOTHING
CAN STOP THEM NOW! WE'VE FAILED!

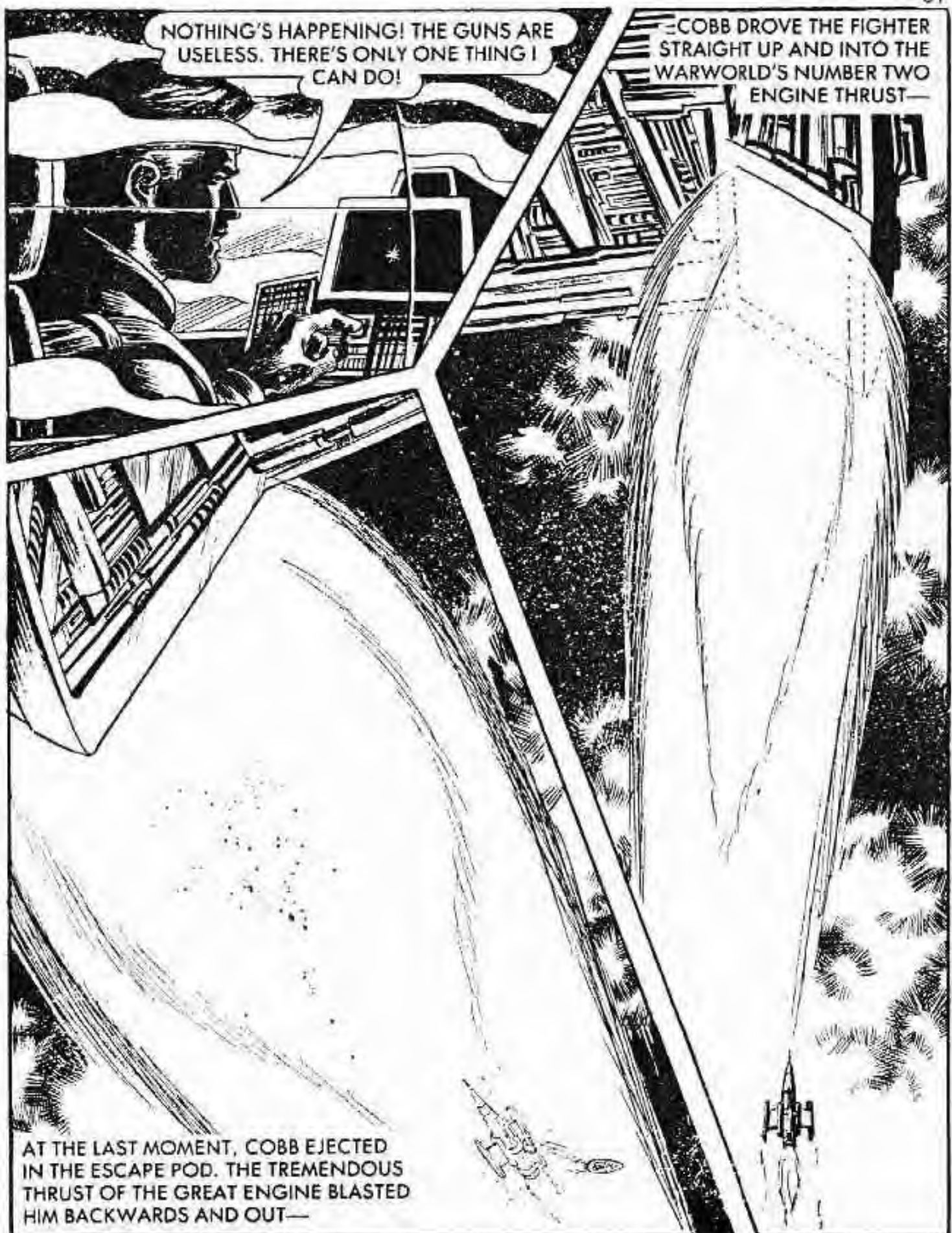
BUT COBB WAS WAITING FOR A LAST DESPERATE ATTEMPT—

THERE'S DAYLIGHT! TIME TO GET OUT OF HERE!
HELL'S FANGS! THAT FIGHTER'S FAILING!



THE FIGHTER FELL ACROSS COBB'S PATH RIPPING THE BOTTOM FROM HIS CRAFT...





NOTHING'S HAPPENING! THE GUNS ARE
USELESS. THERE'S ONLY ONE THING I
CAN DO!

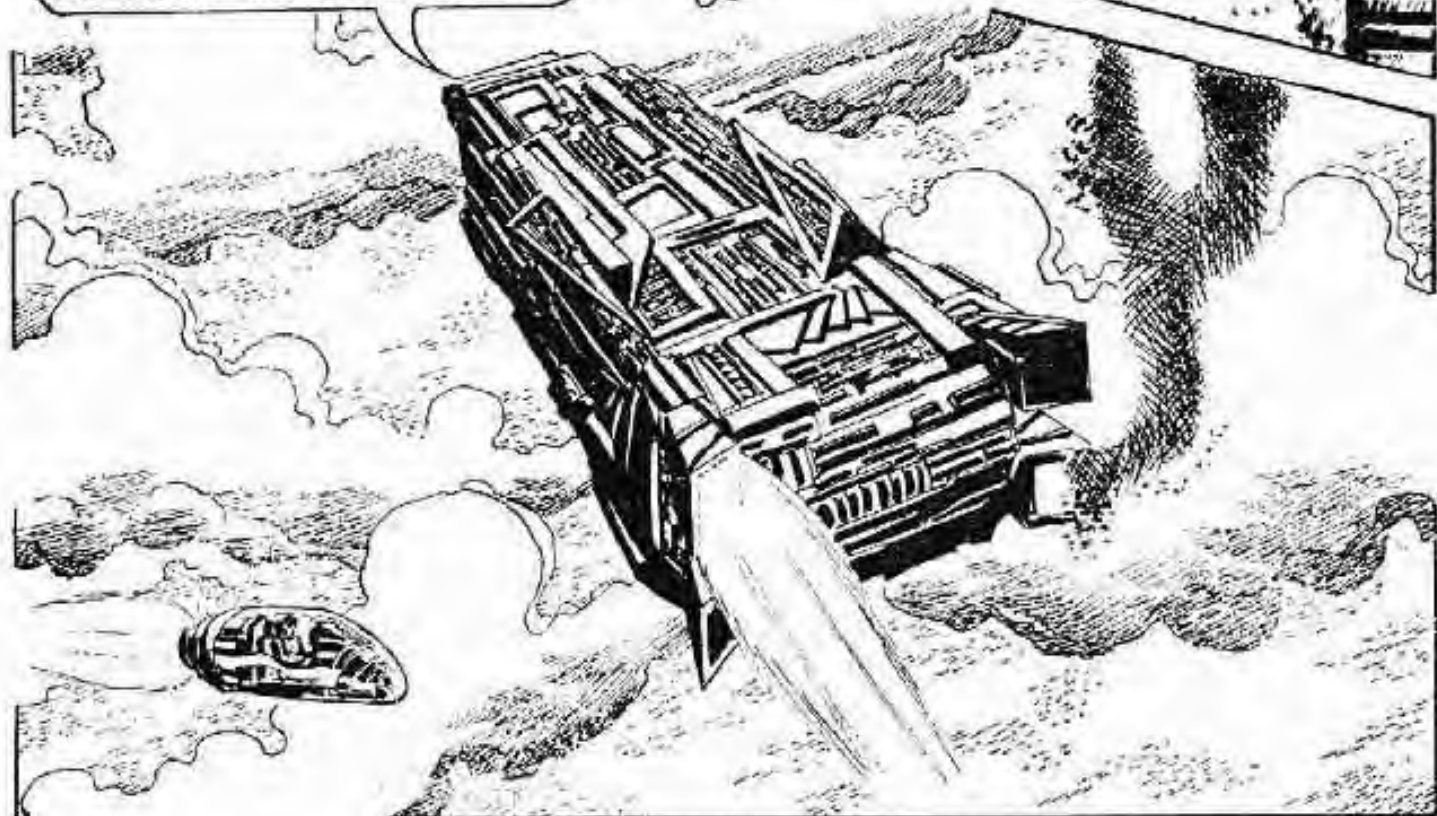
COBB DROVE THE FIGHTER
STRAIGHT UP AND INTO THE
WARWORLD'S NUMBER TWO
ENGINE THRUST—

AT THE LAST MOMENT, COBB EJECTED
IN THE ESCAPE POD. THE TREMENDOUS
THRUST OF THE GREAT ENGINE BLASTED
HIM BACKWARDS AND OUT—

COBB WAS CLEAR WHEN THE FIGHTER CAUSED THE ENGINE TO EXPLODE—

IT WILL NEVER MAINTAIN
LIFT ON ONE ENGINE!

WE'RE FALLING BACK! WE'RE
DOOMED! LAUNCH THE CRUISERS!



THE WARWORLD CRASHED INTO THE SEA—

THE VALK KNOW HOW
TO MAKE A BIG SPLASH!

IT SANK SLOWLY INTO THE OCEAN DEPTHS.

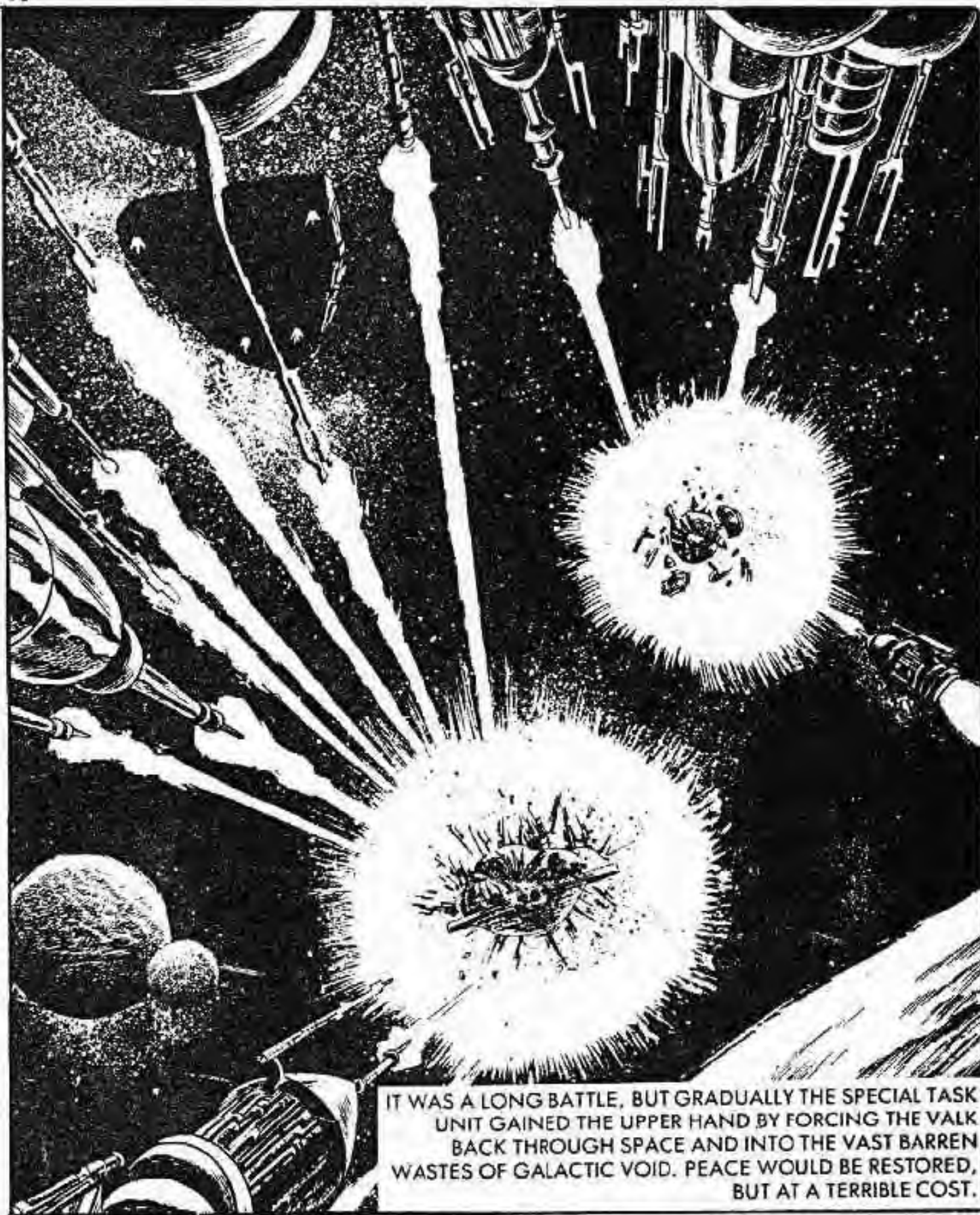


MILLIONS OF TONS OF WATER ERUPTED INTO THE SKIES AS THE VESSEL FINALLY DESTROYED—



IT RUSHED DOWN THE MOUNTAINSIDE ENGULFING THE REMAINING VAIL AS THEY TRIED TO
STORM THE CAVES.





IT WAS A LONG BATTLE, BUT GRADUALLY THE SPECIAL TASK UNIT GAINED THE UPPER HAND BY FORCING THE VALK BACK THROUGH SPACE AND INTO THE VAST BARREN WASTES OF GALACTIC VOID. PEACE WOULD BE RESTORED, BUT AT A TERRIBLE COST.

eldubya/todinepr

**DON'T FORGET THIS
MONTH'S OTHER**

STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 156

24p



MORE THAN A ROBOT! MORE THAN A KILLING MACHINE! IT WAS

THE SYGMA WARRIOR

AND IT WAS MAD.

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STARBLAZER'S

GUIDE TO THE SPACEMEN

89



A Polish Lieutenant Colonel, Miroslaw Hermaszewski, 36, of the airforce left from a USSR base on June 27, 1978 and stayed aloft in Soyuz 30 for 22 hours 4 minutes.